

SNAPS

Road mishap kills old man

UNB, Rajbari
An old man was killed in a road accident near Jamidar bridge on the Daulatdia-Faridpur highway on Friday.

Hatem Ali, 80, of Goalanda Pourashava died on the spot as a Madaripur bound bus from Daulatdia knocked him down at about 10:30am while he was crossing the road.

The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed with the Goalanda police.

Farmer slaughtered

UNB, Noakhali
A farmer was slaughtered by miscreants at Maidchera village in Sadar upazila Thursday night.

Criminals surrounded Abdul Halim, 40, and chopped him to death while he was sitting at a teashop. They also kidnapped the victim's younger brother Gias Uddin, 35, when he came to his aid.

Loan for destitute women

UNB, Rajbari
Local Social Service department disbursed interest free loan amounting to Tk 1.40 lakh among 28 destitute women here recently for carrying out income generating activities.

Ali Newaz Mahmud Khoiyam MP, disbursed Tk 5,000 each to the recipients at a simple ceremony at the Deputy Commissioner's office.

Construction work goes on

UNB, Chapainawabganj
Construction and renovation work of 26 educational institutions in five upazilas of Chapainawabganj district are progressing fast.

The project is being implemented by the Education Engineering Department at a cost of Tk 3.87 cr.

Primary education poorly monitored, 'not really free'

Guardians tell TIB 'study circles' at Tangail villages

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The present low standard of primary education in rural areas is mainly due to negligence by teachers and poor monitoring by government authorities and school managing committees.

These views were expressed by grassroots level guardians of students at 'study circles' organised by Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB) under its 'awareness project' in Madhurpur upazila in Tangail.

Most of the guardians also expressed the view that primary education is not actually free though the government has declared it free and compulsory. The dropout rate is high as poor parents can not meet the expenses charged by school authorities in various ways, they said.

The 'study circles', each com-

prising 8 to 12 members, held frank discussions on primary education problems and remedies in presence of TIB representatives and local elite. The TIB has formed 12 such study circles in the upazila, a press release said in Dhaka on Monday.

The US funded National Democratic Institute (NDI) for International Affairs is supporting the programme.

The 'study circles' discussed all aspects of primary education like supply of textbooks, fees, stipends, and responsibilities of teachers, school managing committee and thana educational officials. Children do not get books at the beginning of the year. Moreover, textbooks are not attractive to them because of 'inappropriate' topics, pictures and low quality printing.

The discussions revealed that school authorities realise various fees for examination, games and

sports, picnic, milad, reception to dignitaries, primary education week, furniture, uniform, power bill etc.

In some schools, students are compelled to bring embroidery work (selected by teachers), failing which, they get poor marks in examinations.

These put pressure on poor guardians, which can be avoided through various programmes like pisciculture and planting fruit-bearing and timber trees on school compounds and roadsides.

The slogan--Santan Apnar Kharoch Sarkarer-- attracts poor guardians but they ultimately become frustrated. Often, there is irregularity in distribution of government stipends, they alleged.

Most of the primary school teachers do not concentrate on teaching at schools because they are engaged in so many activities.

They are not properly trained also and teacher-parents interaction is totally absent.

There should be guidelines for school managing committees so that they can oversee performance of schools.

Thana education officers (TEOs) or assistant thana education officers (ATEOs) seldom visit schools in remote areas although they visit schools at thana headquarters at regular intervals. They do not use motorcycles given by government for official purposes. Unless bribed, no work is done, they alleged.

The 'study circles' said the situation will dramatically improve if teachers are trained, accountability of teachers, thana education officials and school managing committees is ensured and primary education is made really free, the TIB press release said.

CU Syndicate meets today on grading system in exam

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong University (CU) authorities held a meeting on Monday on whether to cancel the grading system in examination and referred the matter to the Syndicate for a final decision.

The Syndicate will meet today. Deans of all faculties, chairmen of all departments and provosts of residential halls were present at the meeting, presided over by Vice-chancellor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury.

Later, the VC and the deans held a meeting with students who are agitating for cancellation of the grading system.

After the meetings, the VC told the Daily Star that the meetings were fruitful.

"We forwarded the issue to the

Syndicate for a final decision. We always want good of out students. The Syndicate will take a decision. If it considers class system better, it will revive it"

At the meeting, the students explained the impact of grading system in result on their job prospects.

On Sunday students formed a human chain on the campus demanding immediate cancellation of the grading system and revivals of old class system.

They also boycotted classes and examinations for two hours from 9am.

The students also held a rally on the registrar building premises under the banner of Sadharan Chhatra Sangram Parisad (SCCSP).

Eight ward commissioner posts in Feni declared vacant

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Feni

The government has declared seats of eight ward commissioners in Feni municipality vacant due to their "absence from meetings and activities for long".

The seats have been declared vacant with effect from August 10, according to a letter of the local government ministry, which reached the municipal authorities here on Monday.

The ministry has also asked the authorities concerned to hold by-election in the eight wards immediately, the letter said.

The vacant seats are of Kutubuddin Hazari (ward 2), Md Kohinoor Alam (ward 3), Abdullah-hil Mahmud (ward 4), Alamgir Hazari (ward 5), Tohid Razanoor Masud (ward 8), Sirajul Islam (ward 9) Salauddin Ahmed (ward 10) and Md Shahidullah (ward 13).

Relief rice stolen, villagers protest

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Villagers brought out a procession in Tangvanga union under Hatibandha upazila protesting alleged misappropriation of rice allotted as relief for flood-affected people.

The demonstrators chanted various slogans against Tangvanga Union Parishad chairman and local Jamaat-e-Islami leader Habibur Rahman alias Sata.

The demonstrators alleged that four tonnes of rice given as relief for the affected people of the union was misappropriated by the UP chairman.

They also held a rally demanding punishment to the persons who misappropriated the rice.

At the rally, the speakers urged the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) to take action against the culprits.

When contacted the UP chairman declined to make any comment.

Sources at the UNO office said they will investigate the allegation and take steps.

'Rift in Khulna city BNP mended'

Meeting in Khulna Aug 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Differences between the two rival groups in Khulna city BNP have been patched up at a meeting held at the official residence of Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman in Dhaka on Sunday night, party sources said here on Monday.

A meeting of workers and leaders of city BNP will be held in Khulna on August 27 to fix dates for holding councils of Sadar thana and Sonadanga thana units of city BNP.

"The rift has been bridged and we have decided to work together", said BNP leader and city Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman.

City BNP Secretary Nazrul Islam Manju said the distance between Ali

Asgar Lobi MP and few other leaders has been narrowed. "We have agreed to work together under the guidance of Ali Asgar Lobi".

Lodi is elected from Khulna-2 (Sadar and Sonadanga thanas) constituency.

Sources said party leaders from Sadar and Sonadanga thanas submitted their written allegations at the close-door meeting which lasted for over three hours.

The food minister after a patient hearing urged Khulna BNP leaders to sink differences or to face disciplinary action.

Information Minister Tariqul Islam was present at the meeting, the source said.



PHOTO: STAR

Villagers in Tangbhanga union under Hatibandha upazila brought out a procession in the area recently protesting alleged misappropriation of rice allotted for flood affected people.

Bangabandhu murder Execution of verdict demanded

A RU CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Progressive Teachers of Rajshahi University (PTRU) on Saturday organised a discussion demanding execution of the verdict in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman murder case at Shahidulla Arts building.

Awami League Advisory Committee member and former Rajshahi University vice chancellor (VC) Prof Abdul Khaleque inaugurated the discussion.

Former Islamic University VC Prof Koshes Uddin attended as special guest. Prof Shanod Kumar Shaha, Prof Antazul Haque, Prof Hasibul Alam Prodhon also spoke.

Professor Dr Anando Kumar Shaha presided over the meeting. All the speakers demanded immediate execution of the verdict.

According to police sources, acting on a secret information, Akhaura police led by officer-in-charge (OC) Md Ali Haider rushed towards Akhaura Kharampar mazar area and nabbed the culprit who was absconding from Special Powers Tribunal Court. In his absence the court sentenced him to imprisonment.

Police sent him to court on Saturday.

Brisk business of fake currency in districts

BSS, Magura

Fake Bangladeshi currency notes coming from across the border is being traded-off in Jessore and Magura districts at a lucrative discount.

The trade-off is taking place for Tk 40,000 original Bangladeshi notes against Tk 1,00,000 counterfeit notes printed in India.

The deputy commissioner (DC) of Magura has confirmed the business of fake currency notes.

Sreepur police arrested two persons early this month and recovered from their possession Tk 92,000 in fake notes of Tk 500 denominations. Cases were filed against them under the Special Powers Act.

Further investigations into the matter revealed that not only in Magura district but also in remote places of Rajshahi and Faridpur districts the exchange of fake notes for original Bangladeshi notes is a brisk business.

Sona Masjid exceeds revenue earning target

A CORRESPONDENT, C'nawabganj

The Sona Masjid land port earned Tk 145 crore revenue in 2002-2003 financial year, exceeding the target by Tk 20.76 crore, official sources said.

The National Board of Revenue had fixed the target at Tk 123.88 crore.

The average monthly collection of revenue during the financial year was over Tk 12 crore.

Import-export through the land port remained suspended for about two months last year due to strike by customs employees. Had there been no strike, the earning would have been around Tk 165 crore, they said.



PHOTO: STAR

A successful female fish farmer receiving prize from Gopalganj Deputy Commissioner at a function held recently at the DC's office marking the on-going Fisheries Fortnight.

AI, BNP leaders address rally Token hunger strike in Khulna for reopening of mills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee (KDACC) and Patkal Sramik Karmaci Sangram Parishad jointly observed a 'mass hunger strike' at the Shahid Hadis Park on Monday for reopening of three jute mills, Khulna Newsprint Mill and Hard Board Mill, and to press other demands.

The other demands include supply of gas through pipeline, quick completion of onconstruction airport, construction of the proposed Padma bridge at Mawa and saving Mongla port from being ruined.

The hunger strike from 9 am to 5 pm ended with a call by the participants to support the 48-hour hartal

Two commit 'suicide' in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A teenaged girl and a housewife allegedly committed suicide in separate incidents in Tarash and Sholonga upazilas on Sunday.

Police and villagers said Sabina Khatun, 16, daughter of Amir Hossain of Dobila village under Tarash upazila allegedly took her life as her father beat her for having an affair with a young man, and tried to arrange her marriage elsewhere.

In the other incident at Kursi village under Sholonga upazila, housewife Khatun took poison following a quarrel with her husband, police said.

Police recovered the two bodies and filed separate cases.

Girl rescued from trafficker's clutch in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A girl was rescued on Saturday in Satkhira district while being trafficked to India.

Police rescued Jyotsna Khatun, 22, daughter of Mujibur Rahman of Chitalmari village in Bagerhat district from Kakkdanga village in Kalaroa upazila and sent her to safe custody in jail hayat. Police also arrested the trafficker, Abdul Hamid of Gharchal village in Sadar upazila and sent him to jail hayat.

The trafficker brought her there from Khulna city on Friday on a plea to marry her, police claimed. On Saturday he took her to Kakkdanga village and tried to traffick her to India, but failed.

A case was lodged with Kalaroa police station.

37 Barisal AL men get HC bail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal.

All the 37 leaders and workers of Barisal Awami League and its front organisations, sued by the local Tempo Sharamik Union, were granted bail by the High Court on Sunday, according to reports received here.

A Division Bench comprising Justice Gour Gopal Shaha and Justice Abdus Salam Mannan granted them bail till filing of charge sheet.

Advocates former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru, Yusuf Hossain Humam, Musfikur Rahman, Golam Abbas Chowdhury Dual pleaded for their bail.

Akbar visits Bibir Bazar

BSS, Comilla

Shipping Minister Col (ret) Akbar Hossain on Saturday visited Bibir Bazar to see the primary work of construction of a land port there.

The land port will be constructed at an estimated cost of Tk 10 cr by private entrepreneurs.

Bibir Bazar land port is one of the country's 13 land ports being constructed by the Shipping Ministry to boost export-import with the neighbouring countries.

Another land port is being constructed at Akhaura, Col Akbar said.

Later, the minister laid the foundation of a new academic building of Hasmat Nesa Girls' High School. He also inaugurated construction work of five new roads in Comilla district.